

November 2015

Groundings Volume Two, Issue Two

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/groundings>

 Part of the [African History Commons](#), [African Studies Commons](#), [Growth and Development Commons](#), [International Relations Commons](#), [Labor Economics Commons](#), [Political Economy Commons](#), [Political Theory Commons](#), [Politics and Social Change Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#), and the [Work, Economy and Organizations Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2015) "Groundings Volume Two, Issue Two," *Groundings*: Vol. 2 : Iss. 2 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/groundings/vol2/iss2/1>

This Full Issue is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Groundings by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.

GROUNDINGS

A PUBLICATION OF THE WALTER RODNEY FOUNDATION



VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 2
Fall/Winter 2015

© The Walter Rodney Foundation, November 2015
Groundings is housed within the DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University, GA

Editors: Jesse Benjamin, Asha T. Rodney, and Firoze Manji
Managing Editor: Aajay Murphy

Contact Information: GroundingsJournal@gmail.com

Cover: Walter Rodney speaks with bauxite workers during a rally in Guyana.

Photos through this issue were generously provided by Stefaniyemiya Ingram, Tony Maxwell Foster, Julian Plowden, Sue Ross, and Tiffany Smith.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
12 th ANNUAL WALTER RODNEY SYMPOSIUM WRAP UP	3
3 rd ANNUAL WALTER RODNEY SPEAKERS SERIES (2015)	7
SPECIAL ATTENTION	
Norman Girvan ... El Buen Oficiante Ante el Esequibo by Jesus Chucho Garcia	11
Save the Date: The 13th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium	13
The Groundings with My Brothers Republished	14
Student Protest at Atlanta CNN Center: A Photo-Narrative by Julian Plowden	16
WALTER RODNEY REMEMBERED	
Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry was About Justice Delayed by Wazir Mohamed	21
Rodney's Legacy Matters, Beyond Guyana by Anne Braithwaite	23
What "Context" Can Justify Walter Rodney's Assassination? by Rohit Kanhai	25
FOUNDATION NEWS	
Contact and Board Information	41
RODNEY PAPERS AT AUC ROBERT W. WOODRUFF LIBRARY	42

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Greetings!

We are pleased to present this third issue of *Groundings*, a publication of The Walter Rodney Foundation (WRF). We continue to bring you news about the Foundation's activities and to provide a platform for discussion and engagement on issues related to the ideas and work of Dr. Walter Rodney.

We begin by providing a snapshot of the 13th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, held in March 2015 at the Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library (AUC RWL), Atlanta, GA. The annual symposium is held in the auditorium across from the Archive that houses the Walter Rodney Papers. This is followed by a recap of the Spring 2015, 3rd Annual Walter Rodney Speaker's Series, held weekly at the AUC RWL, as a public lecture and as a credit bearing course for area students. As readers will see, the guest lists continue to include legendary Pan-African figures, local and international activists, students and scholars at all levels, and engagement with the community – all of which comprise a fitting tribute to and extension of the legacy and pedagogy of Walter Rodney. We continue to be humbled by the engagement of the community in these projects, and invite all our readers to join us in both events moving forward.

Next, in our Special Attention section, we start with a tribute to our comrade, the late Norman Girvan, by our Advisory Council Member and long-standing supporter, Jesus "Chucho" Garcia. This essay appears in its original Spanish version, which supports our desire to reach audiences throughout the whole Pan-African world, and is our first non-English contribution. We intend to publish an English translation, in a subsequent issue.

This is followed by our "Save The Date" for the 13th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, March 18-19, 2016: "Youth Matters: An International *Groundings*". We invite you to participate in the symposium and welcome any topic/issue suggestions that you consider a priority. Contact us by visiting <http://www.walterrodneyfoundation.org/about/contact-us/>. Then, you will find information about the republication, in the form of a new edition, featuring a new Introduction and a new Afterword, of *Groundings With My Brothers*. This is the proud inaugural venture of the new Walter Rodney Press, also based in Atlanta, and augurs what we hope will be many more volumes to come.

Finally, this section ends with a powerful photo-essay, published here for the first time, by burgeoning artist Julian Plowden. Julian was a student at Southern Polytechnic (now a part of Kennesaw State University, in suburban Atlanta), when he was given a camera to use in his architecture class. Julian encountered the student and community protests erupting across the United States in the wake of the police murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson Missouri at the same time that he discovered his eye for photography and his knack for capturing the material space we inhabit. In the months that followed, he organically and spontaneously became an increasingly recognized photographic documenter of the new social movements that have come to form what many are calling the 2nd Civil Rights Movement. We are honored to share his work here as part of our ongoing commitment to sharing unique content of relevance to our readers. Many people are

unaware of these kinds of student mobilizations, which are so rarely covered by the mainstream media.

The final section, “Walter Rodney Remembered”, is devoted primarily to the historic Commission of Inquiry (COI) into the assassination of Walter Rodney, convened last year in Guyana, but now suspended by the newly elected government led by President David Granger. Wazir Mohamed (writing for the Justice for Walter Rodney Committee) provides a valuable perspective and framing of the COI suspension, and Anne Brathwaite (writing for the Justice for Walter Rodney Campaign) provides further updates, as well as the context for the petition (link provided) that demanded a two week extension of the COI, such that the COI could properly and fully complete its work.

A 3rd piece as it relates to the COI was added shortly before the release of this issue. It is a must-read to understand why Walter Rodney was assassinated at that crucial moment in 1980 by the PNC because he was a popular leader whose party was on the cusp of changing the political regime in Guyana. It explores why the COI has been truncated by the new President and leaders of Guyana, now supported by some of Walter's Rodney's (formerly) closest colleagues. It speaks to the disingenuous rewriting of history that has occurred to scuttle and discredit the COI even before it began. It speaks to the political condition of Guyana at this moment. The challenge is for the new government to commit to supporting the findings of the Rodney COI ahead of its release on 30 November 2015 (now 15 December 2015).

A two (2) week extension was just granted, at the request of the Commissioners, so that they could complete their review of the voluminous amount of evidence and testimony to date. On information and belief, but almost assuredly, the extension does not address the calls for a 2-week extension to hear the evidence of additional witnesses.

We all should consider these contributions closely as the historic work of the long awaited COI, as well as justice itself, hangs in the balance.

We conclude this issue with an updated and growing listing of the WRF Board and Committee members; and information about the expanding Walter Rodney Papers at the AUC RWWL archive.

Finally, we continue to accept contributions to *Groundings*. These should be short (no more than 3000 words), clearly written, with a minimal use of jargon. We welcome critical analyses but not profanity. Articles, book reviews, commentary, letters to the editors, poems and other forms of artistic expression should be sent to GroundingsJournal@gmail.com. It is not our intent to publish everything that is submitted.

Ashe.

Jesse Benjamin
Firoze Manji
Aajay Murphy
Asha T. Rodney

WALTER RODNEY SYMPOSIUM ---- REPORT

The 12th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium *March 20th - 21st, 2015*

“Hungry Nation, Hungry World: Engendering Healthy Sustainable Food Systems”

The Symposium outlined the political and socio-economic frameworks used for the development of sustainable food systems. It addressed access to adequate, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods within an understanding of the historical processes of underdevelopment, colonialism, globalization and land-alienation as well as patterns and systems of inequality. There were speakers from across the United States and the world that discussed a range of topics including economic, environmental; farming; gender equity; health; land ownership and rights; and war and conflict.

KEYNOTES

- *Firoze Manji* has more than 40 years experience in international development, health and human rights. He is the Director of the Pan-Africanism Institute for ThoughtWorks. He presented “Not Hungry, But Starved by Capital”.

- *Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o* is a critically acclaimed novelist, essayist, playwright, journalist, editor, academic and social activist. He is a Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. He presented “The Language of Development in Africa”.

HIGHLIGHTS

- State Representative “*Able*” *Mable Thomas* (Georgia House of Representatives, D-Atlanta (District 56) provided greetings and a proclamation for Walter Rodney Day. It was the 1st Walter Day in the State of Georgia. Prior Walter Rodney Days were celebrated within Fulton, County, Georgia.

- *Faheem Khan* of CARE, USA, presented “How do I Feed My Children”.

- A Public Service Announcement “A Millennium to End Hunger: The Time is Now” was presented by students from *Fort Valley State University*.

- Groundings Sessions: *Tiffany Smith* conducted a newly designed and insightful seminar titled “Technology and Activism”.

- The post-symposium after-party was held at *Club Erosol*. *Akala* and *Meryem Saci*, among others, rocked the crowd with their powerful words embedded in their hip-hop lyrics.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

- *Fatma Alloo* discussed the concept of hungry nations in a wealthy world as a paradox of equity in development. *Jesus “Chucho” Garcia* also presented.

- *Mengue Moli Jacques Bertrand*, Diplomat Historian, Cameroon, West Africa, discussed Cameroon’s national policy of fighting, hunger and poverty while facing the challenge of international terrorism. *K. Rashid Nuri* described the creation and growth of the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture in Atlanta, GA.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Graduate Students from CAU presented a framework for analyzing the implications of food security on the current state of poverty. Students from Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University and Fort Valley State University presented a variety of research on decolonizing food, farming and family.

The 12th Annual
**WALTER
RODNEY
SYMPOSIUM**

HUNGRY NATION, HUNGRY WORLD:
Engendering Healthy Sustainable Food Systems

MARCH 20TH & 21ST
2^{pm}–8^{pm} 12:30^{pm}–6^{pm} 2015

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY CENTER ROBERT W. WOODRUFF LIBRARY
111 James P. Brawley Dr. SW, Atlanta 30314

"ABLE" MABLE THOMAS
GEORGIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NGUGI WA THIONG'O
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

FIROZE MANJI
THOUGHTWORKS

K. RASHID NURI
TRULY LIVING WELL CENTER

FATMA ALLOO
TANZANIA MEDIA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

MENCER "DON" EDWARDS
JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATES

FAHEEM KHAN
CARE USA

JESUS CHUCHO GARCIA
CONSUL GENERAL, VENEZUELA

LIZA GUERRA GARCIA
INDIGENOUS AND ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS

MAURICE CARNEY
FRIENDS OF THE CONGO

KWASI DENSU
FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

SAVONALA "SAVI" HORNE
LAND LOSS PREVENTION PROJECT

ANDREW A. LEE
FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

BARBARA EMERSON
HOSEA FEED THE HUNGRY

LINDA JOHNSON
FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

GROUNDINGS SESSION

MENGUE MOLI
DIPLOMAT-HISTORIAN, CAMEROON

PANEL PRESENTATIONS

WRF

Atlanta University Center
Robert W. Woodruff Library

Poster for the 12th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, 2015.



From L to R: Firoze Manji, Jesse Benjamin, Mengue Moli, Akala, Patricia Rodney, and Fatma Alloo pose in solidarity as the first symposium day wrapped up.



Keynote Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o addresses attendees with a powerful discussion.



Former IBW workers/members/leaders Sue Ross, Aljosie Harding, and Lynn Suruma stand in the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library with Mencer "Don" Edwards.



Jose Perez, Jesus "Chucho" Garcia, Fatma Alloo, Mengue Moli, and Firoze Manji participate in a legendary panel.



At the hip hop afterparty at Erosol in Atlanta, siblings Nducu wa Ngugi and Njoki wa Ngugi hang out with performers Meryem Saci and Akala.



Georgia Northcutt, Ariel Greenaway, Shawn Smith, and Bethlehem Tsegay, AADS students at KSU, share their PowerPoint presentation entitled "Case Studies on Hunger and its Causes."



Meryem Saci entertains a lively crowd.



Akala passionately performs consciously-driven hip hop.



Jesse Benjamin, Meryem Saci, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o take a break from dancing at Club Erosol.



Kennesaw State University professor Seneca Vaught moderated the panel "Research on Decolonizing Food, Farming and Family" which included AADS students from KSU.



Dr. Jesse Benjamin, WRF board member, with Fatma Allo, founder of Tanzania Media Women's Association.



Members of the Rodney and Ngũgĩ families, special guests, and members of the Atlanta Pan-African community pose for a group photo the day after the Symposium at the Rodney home.

WALTER RODNEY SPEAKER'S SERIES ---- REPORT

The 3rd Annual Walter Rodney Speaker's Series *January - May, 2015*

Thursdays, 5:30-6:45pm at the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library

OVERVIEW

The Walter Rodney Speaker's Series (WRSS) is a groundbreaking public lecture series that explores the life and work of Dr. Walter Rodney and his core contributions to Pan-Africanism, development theory, emancipatory pedagogy, and theories of race and class in the Caribbean, Africa and the rest of the world. The WRSS is conducted by Dr. Jesse Benjamin, and supported by the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library (AUC RWWL), the Walter Rodney Foundation (WRF), and Kennesaw State University (KSU), as well as many other partners listed on the poster (below).

Dr. Walter Rodney was a leading historian and scholar in the Pan-African tradition, with significant ties to the Atlanta area, but whose life was tragically cut short in 1980 when he was assassinated in his homeland, Georgetown, Guyana. Despite his death, Rodney's works are a living history and this lecture series seeks to keep his stories, his scholarship, and his perspectives in contemporary discourse; to introduce and re-introduce a cross-section of the public to this great man; and to explore how his legacy changed the path of others and remains very relevant today.

The public lectures were held at the AUC RWWL, from January 22nd - April 23rd, on almost every Thursday night from 5:30 - 7:00pm. The Series was widely publicized in Atlanta, via print and social media, and attended by a broad cross-section of the public, as well as students from the AUC, KSU and neighboring schools. Two sessions were held off-site this year; one at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, and the other at Project South. During the week of the 12th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium, the WRSS promoted and was embedded in the Annual Symposium. As you will see below, WRSS speakers were extremely relevant and professionally distinguished in their various fields, ranging from High School activists in the YCAP program at Project South, to scholars sitting on United Nations committees, local professors and engaged community leaders, hip hop artists, and internationally recognized intellectual trailblazers. Discussions were always very deep and engaging, and the participation of the students and community was exceptional.

Community sponsorship grew this year to include 15 regional, continental, and global organizations, which led to an extremely diverse line-up of speakers from traditional and nontraditional academic spaces. Bringing together top international scholars, together with UN officials, Consul Generals, and internationally engaged local activists and community leaders is itself an accomplishment. Adapted from the late and truly great Vincent Harding (a former WRF Advisory Council Member), who pioneered this pedagogical model at the AUC around the life and work of his friend Martin Luther King, the WRSS continues to connect students from the greater Atlanta region with the complexity of Atlanta and the broader Pan-African world of scholars, thinkers, activists, leaders, and students.

THE THIRD ANNUAL WALTER RODNEY PUBLIC SPEAKERS SERIES

Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library
Thursdays, 5:30-6:45pm - Spring 2015
111 James P. Brawley Drive SW, Atlanta, GA 30314



FREE & OPEN
TO THE PUBLIC

FOR MORE INFO:
JBENJAMIN@KENNESAW.EDU

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK:
FACEBOOK.COM/WALTERRODNEYSPEAKERSERIES
FACEBOOK.COM/THEWALTERRODNEYFOUNDATION



1/22

"Sanford to Ferguson and All Points in Between: Organizing Against State Violence"
Stephanie Guilloud, Ashe Helm-Hernandez, Ash-Lee Henderson,
Alex Pitman, Shekinah King, from Project South and YCAP
--- with special guest BocaFloja, Quilomboarte

1/29

"Harding, Rodney, IBW, ATL, and the Pan-African Nexus"
A Tribute to Dr. Vincent Harding
With many special guests

2/5

"Are Your Sneakers Global? Digging into
the Gendered Politics of Your Closet"
Cynthia Enloe, Clark University

2/12

"The Necessity of a General Union Among Us":
Africana Studies, the American Social Contract and a
Pan-African Construction of Justice"
Sam Livingston, Morehouse College

2/19

"Art in the African Diaspora"
Babacar M'bow, Director, Museum of
Contemporary Art, North Miami
*To be held at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights

2/26

"Kwame Nkrumah, Walter Rodney, and Black Power"
Michael O. West, Binghamton University

3/5

"Rodney & West African History: A Commentary" Akanmu Adebayo,
"Tanzanians, We Must Help!" Ryan Ronnenberg, and "Mercer Cook as
Pan-African Intellectual" Lucie Viakinnou-Brinson, Kennesaw State University

3/20-21

The 12th Annual
Walter Rodney Symposium
"Hungry Nation, Hungry World:
Engendering Healthy Sustainable Food Systems"
with presentations by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Fatma Aloo, & many others

4/2

"Walter Rodney and the Russian Revolution"
Robin D. G. Kelley, UCLA

4/16

"Black Lives Matter! The Caribbean and
the Call for Reparatory Justice"
Verene Shepherd, University of the West Indies, Mona

4/23

"Pan-African/Palestinian Solidarities"
Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Jesse Benjamin, Ismail Khalidi,
Banah Ghadbian, and other special guests





























The views expressed by speakers and guests of the Walter Rodney Speakers Series do not necessarily represent those of the Walter Rodney Foundation, the Rodney Family, the AUC Woodruff Library, Kennesaw State University, or our other Sponsors.

Poster for the 2015 Walter Rodney Speakers Series.
Click the image for more information.



Seated, facing forward, from L to R: Stephanie Guilloud, Jaequan Allison, Ash-lee Henderson, Shekinah King, and Ashe Helm-Hernandez of Project South discuss "Sanford to Ferguson and All Points in Between: Organizing Against State Violence."



Cynthia Enloe speaks to a packed house on the gendered politics of sneakers.



Robin D. G. Kelley of UCLA provides a contextual understanding of Walter Rodney and the Russian Revolution.



Babacar M'bow, director of the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, gave a powerful overview lecture, "Art in the African Diaspora," at the National Center for Civil & Human Rights.



Professors from Kennesaw State University, Akanmu Adebayo and Ryan Ronnenberg discuss aspects of Rodney's influence on the African continent.



Longtime comrade Bocafoja informs students, activists, and community members on the current situation of youth and violence in Mexico.



Verene Shepherd, from the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, calls for reparatory justice in the Caribbean.



Students from the Walter Rodney Speakers Series class participate in the Walter Rodney Symposium.



Bocafloja passionately speaks on the situation in Ayotzinapa, Mexico, where 43 students were disappeared.



Firoze Manji speaks during the AADS Student Conference at KSU as an extension of the Speakers Series.



Jesus "Chucho" Garcia, Consul General of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in New Orleans, keeps the audience up to date on Venezuela.



Community leaders, activists, students, and organizers. From L to R: (back row) Tiana Ferrell, Jesse Benjamin, Les Etienne, Ash-Lee Henderson, Jordan Knight, Bocafloja, and Thomas Pettaway; (front row) Ashe Helm-Hernandez, Asia Rodney, Asha T. Rodney, Patricia Rodney, Nautica Jenkins, Shekinah King, Malika Benoit, Nicoles Enos and Stephanie Guilloud, as The Walter Rodney Foundation, Project South, QuilomboArte, and Atlanta Free Speech came together.

SPECIAL ATTENTION

ABOUT NORMAN GIRVAN

Professor Girvan will forever be an extremely important international figure in Caribbean political economy. Girvan's activism and intellectualism lives on through the 1804CaribVoices that he founded. One of his main tenets, he began to speak toward unifying the Caribbean as a "community of culture." Norman and Walter were students at UWI, Mona Jamaica and in London in the 1960s. Both were members of the CLR James study group. Dr. Girvan appeared via Skype at the 10th Annual Walter Rodney Symposium in 2013.



Norman Girvan ... El Buen Oficiante Ante el Esequibo

Jesus Chucho Garcia

Publicado originalmente en Aporrea (<http://www.aporrea.org/actualidad/a211263.html>)

A través del antropólogo trinitario venezolano Jhon Sorriño y la embajada de Trinidad en Venezuela, tuve la oportunidad de ser invitado a Puerto España, en el 2010, para dictar una conferencia magistral sobre el tema de la Independencia de Venezuela y su vinculación con el Caribe diverso y complejo. Para mí fue un gran honor conocer al profesor Norman Girvan, intelectual progresista y con una visión afrolatinoamericanista, como pocos intelectuales del Caribe anglo tienen hacia Latinoamérica. Antes de morir Girvan, 9 de abril de 2014, dio un extraordinario discurso en La Habana el 9 de diciembre del 2013 expresando que: "Hugo Chávez para el momento de su fallecimiento; el activista afrovenezolano Jesús Chucho García, que ahora dirige la misión diplomática venezolana en Angola; le dio el título de Presidente Cimarrón." Con esa última intervención Girvan estaba reconociendo los esfuerzos de Chávez por la integración del Caribe sin mezquindad y con una perspectiva anticolonialista.

UN OFICIANTE CONCILIADOR

Girvan, profundo estudioso del espacio Caribe, internacionales, diplomático, de origen jamaicano, estableció un Puente con los países más avanzados de América Latina que apostaban y apuestan a una nueva humanidad. Es por esa razón que el 19 de abril de 2010 el Secretario General de la ONU responsabilizó a Girvan como EL BUEN OFICIANTE para el tema controversial existente en Guyana y nuestro país. La carta de las Naciones Unidas deja claro que es un BUEN OFICIANTE ante los conflictos que se generan entre las naciones: Artículo 33 "Las partes en una controversia cuya continuación sea susceptible de poner en peligro el mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacionales tratarán de buscarle solución, ante todo, mediante la negociación, la investigación, la mediación, la conciliación, el arbitraje, el arreglo judicial, el recurso a organismos o acuerdos regionales u otros medios pacíficos de su elección. El Consejo de Seguridad, si lo estimare necesario, instará a las partes a que arreglen sus controversias por dichos medios. Artículo 34... El Consejo de Seguridad podrá investigar toda controversia, o toda situación susceptible de conducir a fricción internacional o dar origen a una controversia, a fin de determinar si la prolongación de tal controversia o situación puede poner en peligro el mantenimiento de la paz y la seguridad internacionales.

La tradicion del Buen Oficiante para abordar diplomaticamente en las perspectivas de paz y respeto mutuo, fue un acuerdo entre Venezuela y Guyana implementado concretamente a partir de 1989. Los medios realizaron la siguiente cronologia:

“El 25 de octubre de 2010, el Profesor Girvan, realizó una visita a Georgetown, a fin de dar inicio a las consultas ante los Gobiernos de Guyana y Venezuela. En fecha 01 de junio de 2010 Guyana ratificó al Sr. Hari N. (Ralph) Ramkarran, vocero del Parlamento Nacional, como Facilitador del Gobierno de Guyana en la controversia limítrofe. Durante la Visita Oficial del Presidente Bharrat Jagdeo a Venezuela (21.07.10) el Presidente de la Republica Bolivariana de Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, anunció la designación del Embajador Roy Chaderton Matos como Facilitador por Venezuela. El 04.05.11 el Prof. N. Girvan realizó un viaje a Venezuela, donde sostuvo su primera reunión oficial con el Canciller Nicolás Maduro y se acordó realizar encuentros periódicos entre los facilitadores venezolano, Roy Chaderton, y guyanés, Ralph Rankarram, quienes reportarán los avances a cada una de sus cancillerías. Mientras que serán los cancilleres de Venezuela y Guyana, los encargados de mantener al tanto de las negociaciones al secretario general de la ONU, Ban Ki-Moon.

GUYANA RECHAZA Y EL CASQUILLO DEL DIABLO

Venezuela recientemente, a traves de la canciller Rodriguez, pido al Secretario general de la ONU, Banki Mon ante el cual expreso “hemos traído una carta del presidente Nicolás Maduro para la designación del Buen Oficiante sobre la reclamación histórica que existe entre la República Cooperativa de Guyana y la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, mecanismo contemplado en la normativa internacional y en el Acuerdo de Ginebra de 1966, que es el instrumento que rige la solución amistosa, práctica y jurídica de esta contención territorial”. Sin embargo el gobierno de Guyana a traves de su Canciller, Carl Greenidge, ha sido muy claro “indicado muy claramente al secretario general de la ONU que el proceso de buenos oficios, que hemos seguido fielmente, no parece ofrecer ninguna solución para seguir adelante”...Definitivamente. Guyana, como decimos en criollo esta comiendo casquillo, es decir cuando una persona asusa a otro para buscar pelea y se arme la bronca y ese casquillo lo esta montando la Exxon Mobil...the devil never sleep. (el diablo nunca duerme...ojo pelao.)



SAVE THE DATE
THE 13TH ANNUAL
WALTER RODNEY SYMPOSIUM
MARCH 18TH + 19TH, 2016 | ATLANTA, GA

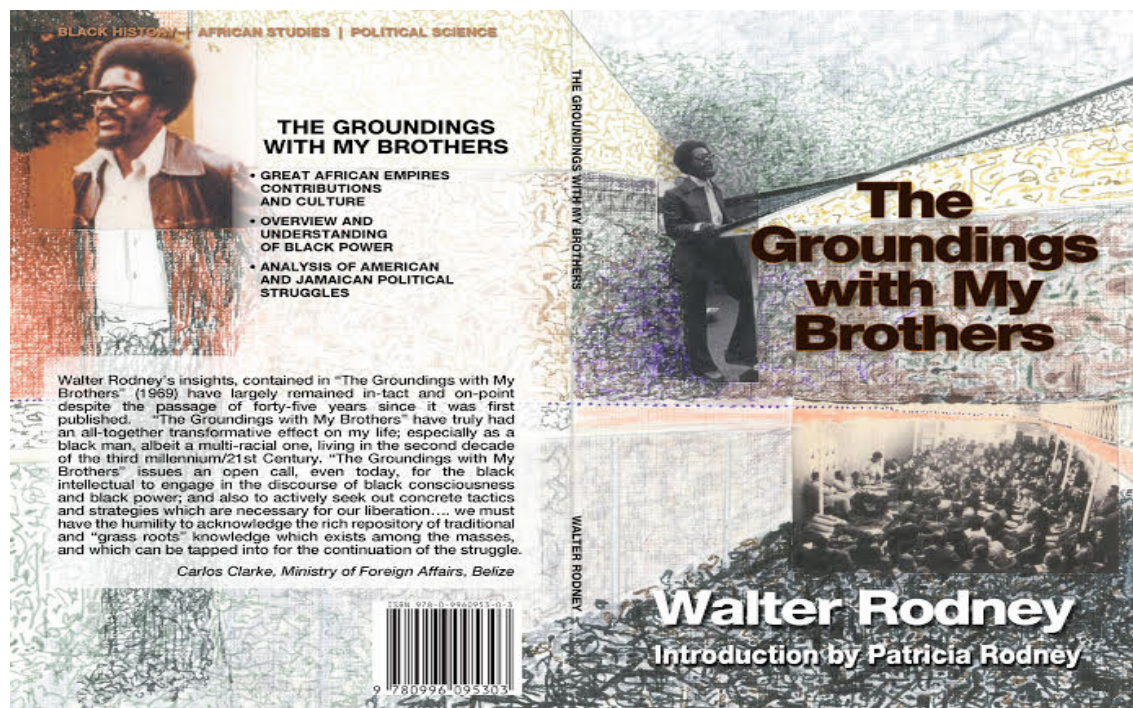
YOUTH MATTERS:
AN INTERNATIONAL GROUNDINGS

#WRS16 | WALTERRODNEYFOUNDATION.ORG

The Groundings with My Brothers - Republished

Originally published in 1969, this groundbreaking work by Walter Rodney remains germane today, 45 years after its original publication. It offers compelling insights into many issues which continue to plague the Caribbean and the African Diaspora. It is telling that some of the conditions that existed then continue to be pervasive today. This 2014 republication of *The Groundings with my Brothers* is the first publication by the recently established Walter Rodney Press. The Introduction is by Dr. Patricia Rodney and the Afterword by Dr. Verene A. Shepherd. The cover design is by E. Bruce Phillips, Jr. All previous Introductions are included in this 2014 version.

The Groundings with My Brothers is considered one of the best pieces of protest literature to come out of the Caribbean during that period. Originally published in 1969, this groundbreaking work by Dr. Walter Rodney remains germane today, 45 years after its original publication. It offers compelling insights into many issues which continue to plague the Caribbean and the African Diaspora. It is telling that some of the conditions that existed then continue to be pervasive today.



The Groundings with My Brothers is a collection of the main speeches made by Walter Rodney while he was in Jamaica for nine months in 1968, and at the Black Writer's Conference in Montreal in October 1968. Two of the chapters: "Statement of the Jamaican Situation," and "African History in the Service of Black Revolution," are regarded as 'the straws that broke the camel's back.' The Jamaican government, who had already placed Rodney under surveillance for his engagement with Rastafarians and other disenfranchised communities, declared Rodney persona non-grata and a threat to national security, and banned him from reentry into Jamaica. After a student protest,

led by now Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Honorable Ralph Gonsalves, the “Rodney Riots” spread off campus to the capital Kingston and became what many historians consider the most significant uprising in Jamaica since 1938.

The significant new Introduction is by Dr. Patricia Rodney, and the new Afterword by Dr. Verene A. Shepherd. Both previous introductions by Richard Small and Omowale are included in this version. The cover design is by E. Bruce Phillips, Jr. This 2014 republication of *The Groundings with my Brothers* is the first publication by the recently established Walter Rodney Press.

Dr. Walter Rodney is the author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* and is recognized as one of the Caribbean’s most brilliant minds.

To purchase a copy of *The Groundings with My Brothers*, please visit www.walterrodneypress.com.

Student Protest at Atlanta CNN Center: A Photo-narrative

Julian Plowden

In Summer 2014, I attended a rally for Michael Brown at the Atlanta CNN center. I was curious to see what a civil rights march would be like because I'd only seen them in movies and couldn't imagine what to actually expect. When I arrived in downtown Atlanta to the march, I saw crowds of people — news reports said there were at least five thousand — gathered at the steps of the CNN center. Initially I just wanted to listen to the great speakers on the microphone in front of the crowds but the more I listened and watched, the more I thought that this moment should be captured for memory. The crowd, the rain, the speeches — I'd never seen anything like it and even though I was only an amateur student photographer compared to the professional news teams I saw there, I felt like my perspective mattered enough to capture nonetheless. At least the photos would help me remember the historical event.





A portrait of local youth leader, Aurielle Marie, who was only 19-years old at the time, speaking to the crowd. One of the surprises I did not expect to see was the amount of women, young people and diversity at the rally. Different religions, families and ages came together — even high schoolers were brave enough to speak on the megaphone about their concerns for justice in America.



Students came out with signs asking if they were next to be unfairly targeted by racial discrimination.



A little girl sits on a man's shoulders — presumably her father — while raising her hands and chanting along with protesters. This photo was used a year later as the cover for *Creative Loafing*, Atlanta issue discussing the progress made since the 2014 Ferguson protests.



Ralliers filled up the streets surrounding Centennial Olympic Park, some too far away to even hear the megaphone against the windy weather — but all still acted in unison.



Almost as soon as the crowd decided to march, loud cracks of thunder began to ring across the sky, and it started to pour immediately.



Protesters fighting to keep their balance during the storm.



Almost too ironic, the crowd marches round the park and in front of the recently built National Center for Civil and Human Rights building. It is a visual representation of the progress made since the civil rights movement of the 1960s and captures the feelings of people fifty years later.



Drenched from the rain, protestors finished the march around Centennial Olympic Park with arms linked. Finally, the storm began to clear.

WALTER RODNEY REMEMBERED

Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry was About Justice Delayed

Wazir Mohamed

Government Ministers should not disparage and denigrate, Cabinet should govern

This statement was originally published by Demerara Waves (<http://www.caribnewsdesk.com>)

The Justice for Walter Rodney Committee has been following with interest the statements of the current government of Guyana through its spokespersons, Ministers Basil Williams (Attorney General) and Raphael Trotman (Governance Minister). From the statements attributed to these officials, their comments demonstrate that they are on a campaign to disparage, denigrate, and thus create the impression that the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry did not accomplish anything of substance. It is not clear why this would be in the interest of the government of Guyana.

One of the objectives of the Commission of Inquiry was to get to the truth as to the circumstances that led to the death of Walter Rodney on June 13, 1980. It will be in the interest of the government of Guyana that the Commission completes its work so that all of the evidence and the hearings can be placed in the public domain.

It will be important at this point for the entire government to make it clear that this Commission of Inquiry should be able to complete its work. By making the recommendation to cabinet to disallow more time for the testimony of crucial witnesses to allow for a smooth and proper completion of the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry, Mr. Williams is seeking to mold the public's perception on the real historical meaning of this Inquiry. There are still crucial witnesses who should appear before the Commission and the Justice for Walter Rodney Committee is calling on the government to allow the Commission to complete its work in a timely manner.

As lawyers Mr. Williams and his Cabinet colleague Mr. Raphael Trotman should understand the importance of crucial material witnesses before a commission of inquiry. It is therefore unfortunate that the Cabinet seemed to have accepted Mr. William's recommendation without regard to due process that he Mr. Williams and his colleague Mr. Trotman are now arguing for in the court of public opinion. Lawyers make their arguments in court. We are concerned about the statement attributed to Minister Trotman as reported in the Guyana Chronicle because it is not based in facts. If Ministers Williams and Trotman were indeed following the proceedings of the inquiry, they and the Cabinet would have known that the inquiry was not a waste of time. Commissions of inquiries are established to find the truth and this inquiry was no different. The world is waiting on the findings of this commission.

Rather than allow the continuation of the hearings for two weeks upon the request of the commissioners, and other interested parties, the cabinet voted against due process. Mr. Trotman's characterization of the "collective decision taken by cabinet" to disallow the continuation of the hearings for two weeks in his words, that is according to the report in the Guyana Chronicle

of July 30, 2015 was not only to save the money of taxpayers, but also what he called “further embarrassment” is particularly disturbing.

As a global committee of activists interested in fairness, equality, and social justice for Walter Rodney we are appalled by any attempt to play with the truth in order to dismiss a commission of inquiry headed by a distinguished Caribbean Jurist, and which comprised two other acclaimed jurists. Non-Governmental persons and organizations cannot compel government, we can petition government. And the response of governments to petitions produces for the public at large a deep sense of the character of government. As such to make the claim without evidence to back up the claim that the extension sought by the eminent panel of Caribbean jurists, that is the three commissioners; the lawyers representing the WPA, Donald Rodney, and the Rodney family would not deliver anything that is earth shattering is very perplexing. May we remind Ministers Trotman and Williams that the proceedings of this inquiry are being closely followed by Guyanese and non-Guyanese across the world. Among those paying close attention to the inquiry are lay people, academics, media people, jurists, at least one chief justice in an important global jurisdiction, members of parliament in several locations of the world, Prime Ministers in several countries, and others.

It is disturbing that senior spokesperson of a government that came to power on the banner of national healing and reconciliation would be involved in this kind of desecration of the Walter Rodney enquiry. Walter Rodney is a national hero of Guyana.

National reconciliation cannot arise in a vacuum. It can only come about through truth telling. The inquiry is about truth telling.

Justice for Walter Rodney Committee
August 15, 2015

Rodney's Legacy Matters, Beyond Guyana

Anne Braithwaite

Guyana's President Granger has refused a mere two more weeks for the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry (WRCOI) to unearth the truth — after 34 years of evasion. The commissioners have been ordered by the Granger government to submit a report by 30 November 2015.

The assassination of Guyana's pre-eminent historian, scholar-activist and author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Dr. Walter Rodney in 1980 remains Guyana's most traumatising political murder. A proper investigation was assiduously evaded by both Forbes Burnham's African dominated PNC — now rebranded as APNU — and the Indian dominated PPP governments. That was until 2014, under his Excellency President Donald Ramotar, when the formal Commission (WRCOI) finally started its work.

The Justice for Walter Rodney Campaign is reminding the Guyana government that Rodney's legacy matters, beyond Guyana.

In an effort to garner support in the current Guyana/Venezuela dispute, President Granger touts Guyana's "progressive" record at the UN in New York and among African leaders.

But at home he is quietly trying to expunge from Guyana's history the record of Guyana's most respected international progressive, Walter Rodney. These are precisely the tactics used by Granger's late predecessor, President Forbes Burnham, the alleged author of Rodney's 1980 assassination.

Granger's APNU/AFC coalition came to power in May 2015 with a narrow cross-racial win over the discredited PPP government, promising national reconciliation. Yet within days of their win, they were undermining the WRCOI, in a short-sighted campaign to disparage and denigrate the Commission's work.

The new Guyana government, right now, continues to efface the work of the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry (WRCOI) into Rodney's assassination by denying the two more weeks it requested to properly complete its work. They seek to frustrate the proper completion of this — or any real inquiry, while more key witnesses die, records disappear, evidence degrades. And we forget.

Is PNC leader Granger continuing to punish Rodneyism for exposing Burnhamism?

Rodney's renowned legacy in Guyana endured sufficiently to curb racial voting for the first time in 50 years, thus enabling Granger's win. Rodney's political teaching had exposed the exploitative nature of Guyana's historic ethnic Indian/African conflicts, which stymied its post-colonial development. But Rodney was seen as a racial traitor to some of the African middle class

and a direct threat to Forbes Burnham's power.

A new dispensation for the Commission could resolve previous abuses, which were not of the Commission's making. However new ministers, Attorney General Basil Williams — who represented the PNC at the WRCOI — and Governance Minister Rafael Trotman simply asserted that the two-week extension was disallowed to save taxpayers' money and, more ominously, "further embarrassment."

We urge Guyana's government to reverse this vengeful decision to wreck the Inquiry. This plea is supported by all three commissioners; the lawyers representing Rodney's party, the very depleted Working People's Alliance — now part of Granger's APNU; Rodney's brother Donald, who survived the fatal bombing that killed Walter Rodney in his car; and the rest of Rodney's family.

The Rodney Family deserves the completion of the investigation and of the full mandate and missions of the COI. Guyana needs and deserves a proper inquiry into this atrocity to promote its healing and reconciliation.

Justice for Walter Rodney Campaign
22nd October 2015

Link to the petition mentioned in the article:
<http://bit.ly/RodneyCOIPetition>

What “Context” Can Justify Walter Rodney’s Assassination?

Rohit Kanhai

Rohit Kanhai is Editor of Caribbean Daylight, a New York-based Caribbean newspaper. Rohit Kanhai provided expert testimony at the Rodney Commission of Inquiry regarding the bomb apparatus that was used to assassinate Dr. Walter Rodney on 13 June 1980.

Context! Context! Context!

Like water crashing over the seawalls, there has been a rush of explanations, based on “context” to justify the shifting political sands, as it swirls with the waves. The “sands of time” seems to have shifted the “line in the sand” so much so, that all commonsense seems to have deserted the land of Guyana.

In the midst of this debate are Walter Rodney and the Working People’s Alliance (WPA). The debaters are WPA members and supporters. The debate itself would make such identities questionable. There are hints of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and *1984* in terms of the rewriting of the history.

Both Dr. David Hinds and Dr. Freddie Kissoon are into the “context” game. Kissoon has repeatedly claimed that the Burnham regime was much more acceptable than the People’s Progressive Party (PPP) regimes of 1992-2015. He has singled out Bharrat Jagdeo as the measure of bestiality. Hinds, in a likewise manner, has argued that the refusal by the PPP to make Red House the shrine of all presidents is out-rightly racist, making the point that Indians do not want Jagan and Burnham to co-habit politically, at least not in the same shared public space. This would suggest that secret rendezvous at Belfield House, or possibly on the seawalls, or midnight meetings embracing each other, as long as it was outside of the viewing public was acceptable. Halim Majeed, the author of “Political Dialogue and Power Sharing: The 1984-85 Burnham Initiative” which documented the secret meetings between the PPP and the People’s National Congress (PNC) with the intent to embrace each other, has been rewarded, being sent to Cuba in the role of Ambassador by the Granger Regime.

According to Majeed:

Time and again, he [Burnham] was at pains to explain that his difference with the leadership of the PPP were in part due to personality problems, tactical approaches to nation building, the PPP’s uncritical acceptance of the Soviets model of development and its dogmatic interpretation of socialism. But deep in his bosom he wanted a unified nation, a significant part of which looked to the PPP for leadership. (p. 26, Majeed)

Burnham’s “pragmatist” approach to nation building including the rigging of the 1968, 1973, 1980 elections and the 1978 referendum. His “undogmatic” interpretation of socialism was the Stalinist model of socialism characterized by the Paramountcy of the PNC party. The “personality problems” was that he wanted to rule under the Divine Right of Kings, forever. His hijacking of the

constitution by means of the fraudulent referendum of 1978, and the sweeping powers of a dictator as enshrined in the constitution, a virtual duplication of the PNC constitution, revealed what was “*deep in his bosom*,” a lust for absolute power. That was non-negotiable.

The crisis in Guyana was documented by Dr. Clive Thomas, in a booklet printed in 1973. As far as my memory goes, it was called *The Crisis of the Working People*. The color of the cover was a light green. The oil crisis of the 1970s was worldwide, and Guyana was not the only country affected. It compounded the Guyana crisis, but the Guyana economy was already in crisis, as noted by Thomas. On the other hand, Guyana had a spectacular windfall with the price of sugar skyrocketing. The Guyana government had a bonanza of some \$276 million dollars from the sugar industry, and the PPP and the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers’ Union (GAWU) engaged in the strike of 1977 over this money. The Burnham government sunk this money into the Hydro-falls project, which went the way of the road to Brazil, nowhere. I still have a vivid image of Burnham, with chainsaw in hand, posing on the page of the newspaper, as he embarked on the project of the road to Brazil. He, from hindsight, qualifies as a Brazilian nut, given the ‘chainsaw massacre’ of the Guyana economy that ensued, as well as the political degeneracy.

Guylines became the norm in Guyana. Once people saw a line, they simply joined it, and then would enquire of someone in the line, ‘what were they lined up for?’ I remember quite clearly, using chicken fat as “oil” not wanting to stand in line. I thought that I had found a smart way to beat the system. Milk, flour, split peas, potatoes, etc., became museum pieces. Guyanese found ingenious means of obtaining these commodities, by bartering sugar and rice to Suriname in exchange for toothpaste, toilet paper, and other necessities.

Burnham and the PNC’s response were to extoll slogans such as “Eat Less, Sleep Less, Work More,” “Produce or Perish,” etc. There was no foreign currency at the banks, and as is well known, “necessity is the mother of invention.” Burnham and the PNC invented slogans to cover-over the reality of the deplorable conditions of Guyana. The social reality also was transformed by changing the conversation as words began to assume newfound definitions. Black-out became “load-shedding,” retrenchment became “re-deployment,” scabs and strike-breakers became “patriots,” PNC henchmen became “functional managers,” and fascists became “democrats,” etc., Orwellian-style. All this in the name of “pragmatic” and “undogmatic” approaches to modifying social reality by means of psychological warfare.

But all was not in the realm of psychology. The Wikileaks revelation that:

Gov’t request to purchase tear gas in 1978 seen tied to referendum, economic situation – US cable

A request in 1978 by the Government of Guyana (GoG) to the US for the purchase of 14,500 tear gas grenades and projectiles raised concerns in Washington that this was not a routine transaction and reflected fears of unrest associated with the approaching referendum and declining economic conditions.

Released by the whistle-blowing website WikiLeaks, a May 11, 1978 cable from the US State Department to its Georgetown Embassy...

was indicative that the Burnham regime had enough money to invest in riot control, instead of

alleviating the suffering of the masses. What is also revealing about this “*riot control*” is that it was aimed at the “black masses.” This was the working-class support of Walter Rodney and the WPA that thronged the streets during the Civil Rebellion that rallied to the WPA as it became a political party in 1979. As Burnham and the PNC knew that it was not dependent upon electoral support, it was now prepared to move against its “black base,” which was being “misled” by Rodney and the WPA. It was open warfare by Burnham and the PNC against the upstart Rodney and the WPA, along with the “misguided” black masses that sought deliverance from economic misery and despair.

The Burnham-led PNC regime knew that the 1980 elections would be a total disaster with the emergence of Walter Rodney and the WPA. It would no longer be a racial contest between the PPP and the PNC. The WPA had enough of a popular following to fundamentally change the political equation. Burnham and the PNC had not rigged elections in order to be removed from power by the emergence of the WPA splitting the black votes. Something had to be done quickly, in order to change the electoral dilemma. For someone who had masterminded the 1968 and 1973 rigging of elections, the constitutionally due 1978 elections had to be addressed. The 1978 referendum was masterminded to circumvent this impasse, with the 1980 elections bringing into being a president with dictatorial power “as if elected.” It is not accidental or incidental that Walter Rodney was assassinated after the referendum of 1978 and before the elections of 1980. Mischief was afoot. This was the context in which Burnham and the PNC masterminded the assassination of Walter Rodney and the decapitation of the popular head of the WPA.

“And finally they killed him.”

There are persons associated with the WPA who currently feel that Walter Rodney was responsible for his own death by engaging in activities that made him vulnerable to the Burnham regime. This is total hogwash. Even if Walter Rodney did engage in activities of whatever sorts, it was the Burnham regime that must be held responsible for the conditions of dictatorship that was imposed on the country. Were it not for the systematic rigging of elections, closing off all paths to the democratic removal of the regime, there would have been no necessity to seek “*any means necessary*” to remove the dictatorship. Furthermore, the WPA was engaged in democratic political struggle. It was the assault on the WPA by the PNC dictatorship that forced it to adopt means of self-defense, and the possible necessity to wage an insurrectionist struggle against the dictatorship. The means of the removal of the dictatorship was dictated by the behavior of the dictator and the PNC party and government. There was no getting around this formidable obstacle to democracy. The issue of the rigging of elections by the PNC is a taboo subject. The PNC wants this part of its history to be exorcised. The population that experienced the rigging of elections must somehow perform some form of Freudian lobotomy to remove this memory from their psyche. By some mystical means, the PNC demands this “exorcism” of the collective consciousness, perhaps inspired by the movie, “*The Exorcist*.” This would certainly make Guyanese heads spin around.

The only point I am making here is that the “*subjectivism*” of persons associated with the WPA who feel that Walter Rodney was responsible for his own death must be brought into the open for debate. It must not remain in the “repressed state” festering and creating doubts as to who are the true architects for the demise of Walter Rodney. Furthermore, there is another dimension

to those who take a “soft” approach to the assassination of Walter Rodney. They feel that Walter Rodney was “*adventurist*.” Again, this is crass ignorance, to put it kindly and not use the word I initially did. It is only from “hindsight” that we can seek to make such a claim.

There is the feeling from “hindsight” that had Walter Rodney and the WPA waited, then Burnham would have died, and it was just a matter of time before the WPA would have been in a more democratic environment and, who knows, it might have been able to win an electoral victory. This is a “*What If?*” scenario, and it is quite impressive for idle minds. For instance, “*What If?*” the Archduke’s driver had not made a wrong turn, presenting the Archduke as a “sitting duck” to the assassin who had abandoned the plan to assassinate him? Would the world have been spared World War I which supposedly was ignited by an assassin’s bullet?

Those who espouse this interpretation of history, must also ask the “*What If?*” question, that if we had waited long enough, “*What If?*” Bharrat Jagdeo and the PPP turned out to be the saviors of Guyana during the reign of Jagdeo, sometime in our reinterpretation of history some three decades from now? Perhaps we should not have struggled against the PPP during the period 1992-2015. Maybe future events will prove that the removal of the PPP paved the way for the re-establishing of the PNC dictatorship, and buttressed by the oil dollars, they were able to rig the 2020 elections and plunge Guyana into one of the darkest period of its history. Given this “*What If?*” scenario, should we now begin to work with the PPP to ensure that the APNU+AFC (A Partnership for National Union + Alliance for Change) government does not attempt to rig the forthcoming 2020 elections to prevent this glimpse into the future? Who could have glimpsed into the future in 1980 and see the remnants of the WPA joining hands with the assassins of Walter Rodney?

The very persons who argue from “hindsight” that Burnhamism was not so bad after all, cannot escape the possibility that Jagdeoism was not so bad after all, since there is a distinct possibility that we can plunge into darker days ahead. So what do we do? Sit down, wait on the verdict of history, and if it does not work out the way we hoped for, pick ourselves up and try to reverse history many years after it had happened? Are we attempting to re-enact a “*Back to the Future*” scenario?

Since we are not ordained to have a glimpse into the future, we must act on good faith in our own actions. And what indeed are our actions? We must respect the fact that we fought against a dictatorship, holding the highest ideals possible in the given situation. Walter Rodney and the WPA sought the healing of Guyana from the terror of racial disharmony. We operated from the “hindsight” of the violent sixties, which remain within our memories. Today we are operating as if it is a thing of the past, which is not guaranteed. The only thing that protects us is that we struggled against the degeneracy of the times, as we saw it, and battled against the forces of evil as we called it. I hope that someone has the speech of Martin Carter, delivered in 1979 at the inauguration of the formation of the Working People’s Alliance as a political party in 1979, a speech in which he called out the degeneracy of the Burnham dictatorship.

The struggles of Walter Rodney and the WPA were captured in the booklet “*Walter Rodney*” by Eusi Kwayana. As late as 2014, Eusi Kwayana chose to give testimony to the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry (COI). This would lead anyone to the conclusion that Eusi Kwayana has a

profound interest in ensuring that Walter Rodney, Donald Rodney, and the Rodney family are not deprived of due process, even though it was three decades late. From June 13th, 1980, this has been the quest of the WPA, despite the horrendous barriers erected by the Burnham-led PNC, as well as the Hoyte-led PNC to prevent this from becoming a reality. After 1992, the responsibility for this must be laid at the doorstep of the PPP, and to a lesser extent to the WPA. The PNC did what it was supposed to do, making every attempt to ensure that the inquiry did not come to fruition. The present behavior of the Granger Regime suggests that the PNC, despite the label of reform, is seeking to turn back the hands of time when it comes to the issue of Walter Rodney and his assassination by the Burnham dictatorship.

So what do we do about the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry at this juncture in our history?

The formation of the APNU+AFC government, with WPA Leaders Rupert Roopnaraine and Clive Thomas playing prominent roles in the administration has posed a serious challenge to the WPA in relation to the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry. The fact that WPA Leader Rupert Roopnaraine is seen as “*compromised*” in the dealing with the life of the Commission is a very serious matter, not only for the credibility of the Working People’s Alliance, but also for the future of Guyana, and even more importantly, for the integrity of those who championed the cause of Walter Rodney, as distinct from Walter Rodney himself. It must be borne in mind that the WPA was comprised of various organizations that preceded the return of Walter Rodney to Guyana. Those organizations worked together as a unified organization, and espoused the values of the Working People’s Alliance that was formed as a political organization in 1979. It was not Walter Rodney that created those values, but the organization that preceded him.

Walter Rodney articulated those values and became the spokesperson for those values, and it was his personification of those values, his popularization of those values, his resonance with the masses as the carrier of those values, that made him, in the eyes of the public, the leader of the WPA. I have been constantly reminded of this whenever it is felt that I sing praises to Walter Rodney as if he were the WPA, only to be reminded that he certainly was not, and he was the embodiment of the values of the WPA.

It was being the public bearer of those values that cost him his life, since it posed a mortal threat to the body politics of the PNC and the PPP.

He did not lose his life for engaging in some “clandestine” activity that was not within the “purview” of the party. We have to be very clear about this. This is why I made the earlier charge that it is seen as if Walter Rodney was being “*adventurist*” by those who are being “*subjectivist*.” Were Walter Rodney not the political threat to the Burnham regime, he would not have been assassinated. This is the primary reality that we must be concerned with, the objective reality. That is what made him the target of assassination, otherwise Burnham and the PNC were total idiots, which some may not doubt.

The contempt which some PNC bigwigs dismiss Walter Rodney today, as if they had him and the WPA under wraps, is a product of “*hindsight*.” At the time of the “Civil Rebellion,” Burnham

and the PNC were apprehensive to the point of ordering “riot equipment,” and it was not intended for the PPP crowd. This arrogance, to dismiss the challenge of Walter Rodney and the WPA in the height of the *Civil Rebellion*, would make the PNC guilty of paranoia, a psychological defect if there was no social base for this personal dysfunction. Why bother assassinating him, if he was not a threat to the political aspirations of Burnham and the PNC? This would put Burnham and the PNC into the Guinness Book of Records for political stupidity, as well as candidates for the Nobel Prize for Stupidity. Those who would make this argument would also qualify.

It is important, at least from my point of view, that we call on the APNU+AFC government to accept and embrace the findings of the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry. We must do so before the Commission delivers its verdict. There would be no point in doing so after, since the persons who tried to “shut down” the Commission in an attempt to discredit its finding, anticipating that had it continued, it would have been a great embarrassment, if not indictment to the Burnham-led PNC dictatorship, will continue to argue that the Commission was misguided in its judgment. These very parties would now seek to discredit the findings of the Commission. There is a gap between the government and individuals who seek to discredit the findings of the Commission. We cannot muzzle individuals from exercising their legitimate rights. But we can demand of the APNU+AFC government to honor the commitment to the findings of the Presidentially-mandated Commission.

The current government did not “shut-down” the Commission on the basis of any wrongdoings. It claimed that the Commission was a financial burden upon the nation. That is a very different argument from claiming that the Commission was prejudiced in any way.

Furthermore, there was no evidence given that the Commission was prejudiced in any way. It was claimed that the Commission was the creature of political posturing on the part of the PPP, but no evidence to substantiate the charge of political bias during the sitting of the Commission, despite the rantings and railings of the PNC’s lawyer, Basil Williams, was presented. That both Attorney General Basil Williams and President Granger shut down the Commission at the earliest opportunity cannot be a good sign for democratic politics in Guyana.

Had the APNU+AFC government provided any evidence whatsoever of bias on the part of the Commission, it would have provided the necessary proof for the dismissal of the Commission. No such case was made then and now, other than the rants of the PNC lawyer, Williams and Trade Union Congress (TUC) lawyer Selwyn Pieters.

The submission of the PNC and TUC lawyers tried to bring Shaun Samaroo into the proceedings. The Chairman of the Commission inquired of them if Shaun Samaroo had appeared before the Commission and had given testimony. This not being the case, the Chairman stated that he did not want to hear anything about any Shaun Samaroo. The Chairman also told Mr. Pieters, the PNC and TUC representative when submissions were being made, that Shaun Samaroo was not employed by the Commissioners, a claim insinuated by Mr. Pieters (who at closing session of the COI, now represented the PNC, having resigned from his representation of TUC).

If the APNU+AFC had any doubts about the conduct of the Commission, they did not

take any legal action whatsoever to make a legitimate case. The only “legal” sanction applied to the Commission was in terms of it being a financial burden to the public, and on the basis of this concern, the life of the Commission was terminated, with the proviso that “Salmon Letters” would be accepted on the part of all parties that felt they had a contribution to make to the proceedings. The APNU+AFC government deemed this procedure as capable of rectifying any shortcomings that may have resulted in the shortening of the life of the Commission. In this way, the APNU+AFC government was claiming that the Commission had enough resources at their disposal to carry out its mandate. According to a *Guyana Times* report of August 9, 2015, under the caption “*Roopnaraine agreed to abrupt end of Rodney CoI*,” it is stated:

Roopnaraine agreed to abrupt end of Rodney CoI

August 4, 2015 - By GuyanaTimes

Startling revelations...

– admits succumbing to PNC-dominated Cabinet pressure

BY ALEXIS RODNEY

Leader of the Working People’s Alliance (WPA), Dr Rupert Roopnaraine has confessed that he was a signatory to the precipitous decision to scrap the Walter Rodney Commission of Inquiry (CoI), but said that he is still prepared to offer his statement to Commissioners who are yet to present their findings.

By making this admission, Roopnaraine, who was appointed Senior Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Minister in the new Government, has confirmed reports that the decision of the Peoples National Congress Reform (PNCR)-dominated Cabinet to abruptly end the life of the Commission was unanimous.

The COI, which was established under the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), to probe the circumstances which led to the death of the founding leader of the WPA, Dr. Walter Anthony Rodney, came to an abrupt end last week, with lawyers representing various interests pleading for the most, two weeks, to complete the investigation.

Minister of Governance and Patrimony Raphael Trotman had told Journalists that the decision to scrap the Inquiry was a collective one made at the level of Cabinet; of which the Working People’s Alliance forms part. Questions were raised about the WPA’s real position on this move, particularly because it has for years been calling for an independent probe into the cause of death of its leader.

Speaking to *Guyana Times* during an exclusive interview on Monday, Roopnaraine said “It was a Cabinet decision. We don’t break ranks at Cabinet on issues like that. We took a point of view and the consensus from Cabinet is inclined to take a particular position, that is it”.

Submission of his statement

He continued “My own feeling was that the Cabinet felt that the time had come for it to come to an end and that enough had been invested in the Commission and that it has had sufficient time to come to its conclusion”, Roopnaraine said, continuing that he will “compensate” by dispatching the statement he has prepared to the

Commission, “so that they would not be deprived of my own evidence, which to the investigation will definitely rob the Commission of a comprehensive, thorough and fair outcome”. On another note, the WPA Leader told this publication that it would have been more satisfying for the party to have the opportunity to present its case to the Commission.

“We have been represented by counsel, who has done a good job, but had the Commission gone on for one or two more sessions, complete with all the witnesses, it would have been great”.

He said “I had a statement in readiness for the Commission, expecting at some point to be called. But what I will do, I will be submitting my statement to them; although it will not allow time for a cross examination but at least they would have my statement”, Roopnaraine said.

According to the WPA Leader, his statement has been “sitting there” and ready for months, noting that nothing that has transpired in the Commission could incline him to change it.

“It remains what it was two or three months ago. I’m anticipating that I will send that statement during the course of the week”.

The Commission of Inquiry met for its last two sittings last Monday and Tuesday, where lawyers representing various interests in the investigation made their final submissions, summarizing the evidence that have been so far presented.

They too had a lot to say about Government’s decision to have the final session wrapped up in a mere two days. Chairman of the Commission, Sir Richard Cheltenham said while Commissions of Inquiry were “creatures of the executive”, the move by the David Granger Administration will not speak well for the fairness of the final report which commissioners were expecting to present by November.

The COI, which was convened in February 2014 by former President Donald Ramotar, has had some 66 sittings with a total of 29 witnesses giving evidence; three of whom are still to be cross-examined. The evidence of those witnesses – retired Major General Norman Mc Lean, former Police Constable Allan Gates and Holland Yearwood were said to be crucial to the investigation. Further, the Commission was still to hear from witnesses such as former Crime Chief Cecil “Skip” Roberts, Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine and former People’s National Congress Leader (PNC) Robert Corbin – all of whom have been issued with Salmon letters to appear before the Commissioners.

Cheltenham said there was adverse evidence provided against many individuals who were alive, who have not been provided with an opportunity to come forward to confront that evidence and comment on it.

Meanwhile, Queens Counsel Andrew Pilgrim, the Attorney representing the interest of the widow and children of Dr. Rodney had urged Commissioners to petition the new Administration to see if it could give some leverage to its decision

to allow for at least two more weeks, so that the remaining pertinent witnesses could be heard.

Waiting 35 years for closure

He said the family members of Dr. Walter Rodney, the WPA co-founder, have waited some 35 years to find solace and closure. He urged the Administration to take into consideration the Salmon letters that were sent. He said there was still time for Government to make a decision in this regard, noting that he was willing to support any entreaty the Commission would make in that manner.

Lawyer for Donald Rodney (Dr. Rodney's brother and the only witness), Keith Scotland said "history will be unkind to us", as the Commission was very close to the end of the hearing and the premature end would only open the new Government to criticism that it had "politicized" the COI. He said the hearing, which has taken 34 years to commence, might very well be referred to a "pappy show".

The Commission, including its Chairman Barbadian Attorney, Queen's Counsel, Sir Richard Cheltenham; Jamaican Queen's Counsel Jacqueline Samuels-Brown and Trinidad-based Guyanese Senior Counsel Seenath Jairam, was set up to investigate who or what was responsible for the massive bomb blast that caused the instant death of the WPA Co-founder on the evening of June 13, 1980.

At the time, President Ramotar had said that the establishment of the Inquiry was owing to the persistent request made by Rodney's widow, Patricia, and their three children. However, the People's National Congress (PNC), the major partner in the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) coalition, had maintained that the move was a political stunt taken to tarnish its reputation. (End of Report)

Since Dr. Roopnaraine was a member of the Cabinet, he was within his constitutional rights to abide with the decision of the Cabinet. This did not rule out his dissenting voice, but that is for the WPA and Dr. Roopnaraine to deal with.

What needs some explanation is the statement that:

It was a Cabinet decision. We don't break ranks at Cabinet on issues like that.

We took a point of view and the consensus from Cabinet is inclined to take a particular position, that is it.

The Cabinet is made up of persons. The "We" is not a unified voice when an issue is being debated. Each person must present his/her point of view on a matter, and when the dialogue/discussion is over, a decision is made as to what action must be taken. It is here that consensus is reached. Consensus is different from unanimity. Consensus allows for dissent on the part of a minority. Unanimity demands no dissenting voice. Consensus is the will of the majority, and that will becomes the decision of the body. Cabinet decisions are not made in advance of the meetings, otherwise the Cabinet would only be a "*rubber stamp*" for whoever already made the decisions that must be ratified. It is similar to a jury that demands unanimity as distinct from consensus, as some cases require. But the jury must first of all hear the facts, evaluate the facts, and then make a decision. The decision does not precede the deliberations.

The statement “We don’t break ranks on Cabinet issues like that,” is perplexing. Dr. Roopnaraine needs to assist us in understanding what he meant. As the Minister of Education, this is one “particular position” that he can educate the nation on, in his first Civic lesson to the nation. As the Minister of Culture, Dr. Roopnaraine must be responsible for setting the standards of a new culture that is fundamentally different from that of both the PPP and the PNC. Dr. Roopnaraine, who has been engaged in a struggle for a new political culture, must also be aware that every word that he utters will be subjected to the most severe scrutiny, since he is seen as being one of the best and the brightest, and ranks very high for being one of the leading lights in the struggle for a better Guyana. After all, he was one of the persons whom Eusi Kwayana held up his hands and raised it high at the Walter Rodney Mall, declaring that this was symbolic of the racial unity of the working people. The other hand that was held high by Eusi Kwayana was that of Walter Rodney. The clasping of those two hands remains embedded in the minds of those who witnessed it. It was a moment to remember, a sight to behold. It is engraved in my mind, and will forever remain there. Today, the hand of Walter Rodney is no more, at least, as a body part. But the sacredness of those hands still remains in the clasp of Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine. Letting go of what Dr. Walter Rodney stood for, and gave his life for, still remains within the hands of Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine. Otherwise he would be nothing less than a betrayer of the hopes and aspiration of Dr. Walter Rodney and the Working People’s Alliance. The hopes and aspirations of the working people of Guyana of all races still lies in the hands of Dr. Rupert Roopnaraine.

There is nothing in the statement by Dr. Roopnaraine that invalidates the findings of the Commission. According to him:

“My own feeling was that the Cabinet felt that the time had come for it to come to an end and that enough had been invested in the Commission and that it has had sufficient time to come to its conclusion”, Roopnaraine said, continuing that he will “compensate” by dispatching the statement he has prepared to the Commission, “so that they would not be deprived of my own evidence, which to the investigation will definitely rob the Commission of a comprehensive, thorough and fair outcome.”

If my understanding of Dr. Roopnaraine “compensation” is correct, he has assured us that the submission of his evidence will ensure that the findings of the Commission will have a “comprehensive, thorough and fair outcome.”

Most of the evidence presented to the Commission was not “new” insofar as its contents revealed. The Burnham-led PNC government did everything to thwart the presentation of the evidence, as well as subverting the judicial process. Much of what was presented was public knowledge. The evidence had accumulated, and was incriminating to the regime. A lot of energy was expended by the regime to ensure that the evidence did not make it way to the judicial process, and when it did, the Burnham-controlled judicial process subverted the evidence. Due Process was not facilitated by the authorities that were constitutionally charged with doing so – this is why a Commission of Inquiry was necessary. The International Commission of Jurist Report (ICJ) remains one of the most objective documents concerning international standards, standards to which the Guyana government is signatory to, in terms of honoring its commitment to the wider world in which Guyana is a part of.

Dr. Skuse Report

The most important evidence, in terms of the cause of death, was under the jurisdiction of the forensic scientist, Dr. Frank Skuse. Dr. Skuse was sent by the British government at the request of the Burnham administration, along with Dr. Molesworth Johnson, a pathologist.

Dr. Skuse presented his report to the Guyana government, and this was acknowledged by Crime Chief, Cecil 'Skip' Roberts, who studied the report. This report was never presented to the courts in any of the proceedings that needed the findings contained in them. The findings were totally disregarded in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) report.

Dr. Skuse identified the device used as belonging to the Harris Porta Phone system of walkie-talkies. This was forensic evidence taken from the bomb scene, and some of it recovered from the body of Dr. Walter Rodney, located by means of X-ray plates. The crystals were identified as of the frequency range of 151.025 MHz, the Very High Frequency (VHF) range. It had specific peculiarities, such as line of sight, meaning that the antennas of the transmitter and receiver had to "see" each other in order to send and receive signals. The fact that the walkie-talkie was sitting on the lap of Dr. Rodney meant that it was just about two-feet off the ground imposing a severe limitation on the distance that the signal traveled. The fact that the device was located inside of a motor car meant that the metal body of the car acted as a "shield" from radio signals, and only those that entered through the windows could have activated the device. The fact that the prison fence was a block away also meant that signals emanating from a given direction and height would be blocked.

The hands of Dr. Rodney were not damaged. This led both Dr. Skuse and Dr. Johnson to the conclusion that he was not handling the device at the time it exploded. It led to the conclusion, giving all the other evidence, that the device was activated by remote control. Yet the CID report contradicted this forensic evidence, and made the claim that it was a timing device.

The nature of the explosive, identified as TNT, was also a major contributor in deciding the nature of the explosive device. The fact that TNT, as a substance is deemed "high explosive," means that it cannot be set off without the use of a "high-explosive" detonator. TNT was, under the conditions obtaining on the night of June 13, 1980, impossible to be activated, without the use of a detonator. This meant that the focus shifted from the explosive substance itself, and focused on the detonator.

The detonator itself was subject to heat, friction, impact, or electromagnetic induction as a means of being activated by accidental means. Heat could be ruled out, since the detonator was inside of a wood box, the engine turned off. Friction could be ruled out, since the detonator was in a wood box, and was not subject to any frictional forces. Impact could be ruled out, since the detonator was in a wood box, and sitting on the lap of Dr. Rodney. Since the hands of Dr. Rodney were undamaged, no handling of the device took place. No timing device or any indication that a timing device was used was indicated in Dr. Skuse's report.

Dr. Skuse came to the conclusion that the device was activated by a radio signal. There were no "ifs" and "buts" about his conclusion. It was based firmly on the forensic evidence of the bomb

scene.

The quantity of explosives used was designed to kill a person. It could not have been more than two to three ounces, ruling out completely that Walter Rodney and Donald Rodney were on their way to blow down a prison wall, in order to facilitate the escape of prisoners, an absurdity if ever there was one based on the evidence. The quantity could kill a person, no doubt, but it could not do much damage to a wall in the open atmosphere. The damage done to the car was because of the enclosed nature of the vehicle, with the resulting bottling up of the shock waves. Both Dr. Skuse and Dr. Johnson noted the “anti-personnel” nature of the device. This meant it was designed with the specific intent upon killing a person, not doing damage to property.

Gregory Smith’s book, supposedly the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, proved to be his undoing.

First of all, the evidence found by Dr. Skuse on the scene, forensic evidence, contradicts Smith’s claim of providing Dr. Rodney with a toy walkie-talkie set. The Harris Porta Phone device, in its most basic model, was sold for approximately US\$800.00 in 1979. This was an exceedingly expensive set, used for military and security purposes. In comparison, a toy walkie-talkie would be valued at US\$10-30 at most. And the number of electronic components would be miniscule in comparison to that found on the scene of the explosion, a toy set having about 30-40 components in comparison to the Harris Porta Phone which carried more than 300 components. Even more damning was the discovery of crystals and the frequency of operation. Furthermore, a toy set could not operate within the frequency range that was identified by Dr. Skuse’s evaluation of the forensic evidence.

Smith’s claim of toy sets was intended to prove that the device went off accidentally, subject to the millions of radio waves that pervaded the atmosphere, even from abroad. He emphasized this time and again in his book, desperately trying to convince readers of the accidental nature of the explosion that killed Dr. Rodney. The forensic evidence revealed a highly sophisticated military grade device that was not subject to any “spurious signals” in the sense Smith claimed. Furthermore, the frequency of 151.025 MHz in the VHF range meant that the signal was highly localized. From a height of six feet to six feet between transmitter and receiver, the distance of a signal would travel at most 5.4 miles. The box sitting in the lap of Dr. Rodney could not have been more than two feet off the ground, thereby imposing a severe limit on the line of sight range of the signal, with the engine block of the car in the way.

According to Donald Rodney, the first test took place without the turning of any switch. And the device worked. This would suggest that the device was already powered up and running. Smith had, according to Donald Rodney, turned the switch in a given direction, and asked him, Donald, to repeat the action. Donald Rodney complied with Smith’s request. Smith had to be extra-ordinarily confident in the quality of the device to have taken such a risk, if it was subject to “spurious signals.” Nevertheless, the first test went according to plan, and the signal was received.

Upon receipt of the first signal, following instructions, Donald Rodney turned the switch to the position as instructed. In the scheme of things that followed, this meant that the explosive

device was now “switched” into the circuit. When the second signal came, instead of merely causing a light signal to flash, it activated the detonator, which in turn activated the explosives, resulting in the death of Dr. Rodney and injuries to his brother Donald Rodney.

This is all the forensic evidence needed to incriminate Smith.

The question is how did explosives get into the device, since Smith claims that he gave a toy walkie-talkie to the Rodneys.

The Skuse report reveals that there were no traces of explosives on the hands of Dr. Rodney. This means that he was not handling explosives at the time. The tests done on the vehicle, especially the steering wheel also revealed no traces of explosives, and by inference Donald Rodney was not handling explosives either. This would suggest that the explosives were planted in the box, unknowingly to the Rodneys.

Smith’s account on how he left Guyana was proven to be blatantly untrue. His sister, Anne R. Wagner, contradicted many important details in Smith’s book, and incriminated Smith with her testimony. She did not have anything to say about the authenticity or truthfulness of Smith’s account as stated in the book. Everything she claimed to be true was a regurgitation of what her brother told her, “Hook, Line, and Sinker.”

Captain Gerry Gouveia’s evidence also incriminates Smith, and the Guyana Defence Force, along with top ranking state officials. The evidence is on record. This point was noted by Commissioner Jacqueline Samuel Brown, as she read from the pages of Smith’s book, and the sister added the information about the presence of Smith’s girlfriend and two children.

The issuing of the passport by the Burnham government and state officials is devastating. The fact that Smith traveled to Guyana in 1982 is beyond comprehension, but the truth is what it is. Thankfully, Ms. Wagner indicted the state, acting in collusion with her brother, something we could not have anticipated in our wildest dreams. Her presentation to the Commission of the actual passport that Smith used was incriminating. The application by the Guyana Defence Force for the issuance of the said passport to Gregory Smith, and the approval by GDF was conclusive evidence of the state’s involvement and full knowledge of the identity of Gregory Smith.

I do not have to recite the damning evidence that the Commission has at its disposal, the above being merely the more technical parts of the evidence that I was personally involved with. There is a super-abundance of incriminating evidence, and this is why there is a concerted effort to abort the hearings and discredit the findings of the Commission. It would suggest that President Granger is under pressure to satisfy the demands of the Burnhamist faction of the PNC party.

In closing, I would repeat the point, that we should call on the APNU+AFC government to accept the findings of the Commission, regardless of what the Commission verdict is. The reason that I would like us to make that call before the Commission releases its finding is, if the Commission’s verdict is against the PNC, there would be no incentive on their part to accept the decision. It must be done before the verdict is given.

On the other hand, the involvement of the WPA in the present government must be on the basis of principle. If the assassination of Walter Rodney is justifiable in the eyes of the PNC, and by extension those who are trying to subvert the Commission's work as well as its decision, then we are as guilty as they are, if we, out of opportunism, fail to raise our voices in protest. We would be justifying Jagan's famous quote in relation to the demand by Shaka Rodney for an inquiry into his father's death, "*What useful purpose would it serve?*" It would appear that there are some of us who now share this view. I certainly do not!

If the APNU+AFC government wants the support of the WPA, then it must be based on the principles that Walter Rodney and the WPA fought for, and still struggle for. We must hold the current government to the promises of a better future for Guyana. Even Captain Gerry Gouveia told the Commission of Inquiry that he did not want a return to those days of Burnhamism, despite being a beneficiary of some of the malpractices.

The 2020 election will be one of the most challenging elections that Guyana will be faced with.

The background of all elections in Guyana's future will be the oil dollars. Some will claim it is in the foreground. But the lure of Black Gold is too enticing to ignore. If we do not solve our political problems before the oil well begins to gush out oil, we will compound all of our problems, and we will be dancing on a slippery slope. This means that we have to engage in the struggle of our lives over the next five years. If we do not want a return to the degeneracy of the PPP, then we will have to make one of the greatest efforts imaginable to prevent this. But the first step in this direction is to give the PPP supporters a glimpse of what Guyana's sons and daughters can be, in the present, not of the past and in the future. If we fail to do so, in the very near future, Guyana will be faced with a carnage the like of which we can never imagine possible. There is no way that the Black population will subject themselves to the PPP in office given the experience of the past twenty three years. The horrendous polarization of wealth in the country neutralized the PPP and allowed Indians to surrender power, under threat of black discontent. We cannot allow any justification for the return of degenerate pro-Indian rule, fueled by discontent with the current government. Despite inheriting a horrendous situation, with some degree of prudence, it is possible to raise the quality of life in Guyana for all, thereby diffusing the racial tensions that exist, as reflected in the voting pattern. But it is a razor's edge to walk on, and if we only err, it will be to our destruction. I am not saying anything that is new. We cannot sing praises to the 28 years of Burnhamist abuse, or to the 23 years of PPP's degeneracy. We are left to creating a new reality, one that inspires the confidence of the entire population, of all races. The major task is to win over that slim majority that is necessary to keep the PPP out of power, by legitimate means. A return to the past and a justification for the rigging of elections as a means of keeping the PPP out of power is not something that should even be contemplated under any circumstances whatsoever. Just another "*What If?*" for those who want the supposedly easy way out.

The claim by the PNC that it was the WPA's struggle that led to the victory of the PPP, thereby bringing twenty three years of pain and suffering to the Guyanese people is another set of hogwash.

It was the PNC that chose the path of rigging elections as a means of staving off the PPP's Indian majority. There were enough "*What If*" scenarios that the PNC could have opted for, but it chose a particular one that brought forth the WPA as a means of putting a halt to the degeneracy of the PNC.

Election rigging brought forth an economic disaster as Burnham and the PNC had to create a military infrastructure to facilitate a dictatorship. It was virtually impossible to sustain life with dignity in Guyana under those conditions.


The PNC's response of assassinating Walter Rodney and brutalizing the WPA led to the emergence of the PPP in 1992, and was the direct result of the PNC's behavior and arrogance. It was the PNC that created the conditions for the twenty-three years of the PPP. Those who want to lay this on the doorsteps of the WPA must reassess their role in bringing Guyana to its knees.

We are at a pivotal point in our history. Imagine a Guyana without the WPA, and we are back into the racial camps of the PPP and PNC. It is the legacy of Walter Rodney and the WPA that gives us hope that a multi-racial Guyana is possible despite all the problems that we have.

The migration of Guyanese from Guyana is making the nation vulnerable to external forces. If Indians flee Guyana, and relinquish what their forefathers have paid in blood for, so be it. If Blacks are contented to allow the country to change dramatically with the introduction of foreigners to fill the void, so be it. But the complaint will be the same; that they are losing what their forefathers paid for in blood. So the new arrivals will become the new targets of political power, unless they can be contained. And the merry-go-round continues. The Amerindians continue to suffer regardless, and the gold dredges continue to contaminate their environment, despite having celebrated Amerindian Heritage Week not too long ago. Eat, Drink, and Be Merry for a day, and then back to the daily routine of suffering. Let the gold rush begin, another OMAI (massive Guyana gold mine, plagued by past disasters) in the making. And let the rush for Black Gold begin also. In terms of making Guyana a better place for ALL Guyanese, we will be pursuing Fool's Gold.

Dr. Clive Thomas' (now Presidential Adviser to the Granger government) dictum in his work, "Bread and Justice" still rings true:

"Bread, or more correctly, the promise of bread cannot be traded for justice."



WARWICK

Designing Histories of Slavery in the Database Age

Professor Vincent Brown
(Harvard University)

The Annual Walter Rodney Lecture
Hosted by the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies

Tuesday 27th October 5.15pm
in R0.03/4, Ramphal Building
The University of Warwick

Refreshments will be provided.
All welcome.

Multi-media historian Vincent Brown is Charles Warren Professor of History, Professor of African and African American Studies, and Director of the History Design Studio at Harvard University. His research, writing and teaching are focused on the political dimensions of cultural practice in the African Diaspora, with a particular emphasis on the early modern Atlantic world.

warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ccs
Follow the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies on Twitter
@CaribbeanCentre

In 1984, the Centre for Caribbean Studies at Warwick University, UK, established the Walter Rodney Memorial Lecture in recognition of the life and work of one of the most outstanding scholar-activists of the Black Diaspora in the post World War II era. Rodney's scholarship and activism encompassed 'grounding with his brothers' in Guyana (his country of birth), the wider Caribbean, Africa, the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

The first Walter Rodney Memorial Lecture was entitled 'The State, Politics and Violence in the Anglophone Caribbean' and was given by Dr Harry Goulbourne in April 1985. The Centre was subsequently renamed the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies has routinely invited a distinguished speaker to deliver the Lecture. Recent lectures include presentations by the Most Hon P.J. Patterson, former Prime Minister of Jamaica (2010), Cecil Gutzmore (2011), Paget Henry (2012), Silvio Torres-Saillant (2013) and Verene Shepherd (2014).

The 2015 Lecture was presented by Vincent Brown.

FOUNDATION NEWS AND INFORMATION

The Walter Rodney Foundation
3645 Marketplace Blvd. Ste 130-353
East Point, GA 30344
Ph 678.597.8754 | Fax 404.601.1885

walterrodneyfoundation@gmail.com
Twitter - @RodneyProject
Facebook – The Walter Rodney Foundation

GOVERNANCE

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair: Patricia Rodney
Vice-Chair: Adisa Douglas
Secretary: Karen Jefferson
Treasurer: Joseph Whittaker

BOARD MEMBERS

Jesse Benjamin
Noble Maseru
Asha T. Rodney
Kanini Z. Rodney
Kurt B. Young

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Babacar MBow
Kwaku Danso-Boafo
David Dabydeen
Colin Hilaire Cholmondeley
Howard Dodson, Jr.
Jesus “Chucho” Garcia
Budd Hall
Keith Jennings
George Lamming
Zakia Hamdani Meghji
Gail Reed
Donald Rodney
Kathy R. Scott
Ewart A.C. Thomas

COMMITTEES

FINANCE, FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT

Chair: Joseph Whittaker
Adisa Douglas
Sheg Lawal
Asha T. Rodney

PROGRAMS

Chair: Noble Maseru
Co-Chair: Karen Jefferson
Gillian Barclay
Adisa Douglas
Kanini Z. Rodney-Phillips

PUBLICATIONS

Jesse Benjamin, Chair
Aajay Murphy
Patricia Rodney
Bernice Scott
Kurt B. Young

SYMPOSIUM

Asha T. Rodney, Chair
Jesse Benjamin, Co-Chair
Hashim Gibrill
Karen Jefferson

THE WALTER RODNEY PAPERS

In 2003, the Walter Rodney Papers were donated by the Rodney family to the Robert W. Woodruff Library of the Atlanta University Center. The Collection is the largest and most comprehensive collection of writings, speeches, correspondence, photographs and documents created by or about Walter Rodney anywhere in the world.

The Walter Rodney Papers are available for viewing and research in the Archives and Special Collections of the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library.

The Walter Rodney Foundation also maintains [an up-to-date bibliography](#) of all books, papers, journals and articles written by and about Walter Rodney.

The Walter Rodney Papers span the years 1960–1987, with the bulk of the collection from the period 1970–1979. The collection provides insight into Walter Rodney’s life as a scholar and an activist, primarily revealed through his writings and teaching.

Included are:

- Scholarly achievements of Walter Rodney,
- Published and unpublished speeches, lectures, journal articles, book reviews, chapters in books, and drafts of books he authored,
- Employment papers, syllabi, reports, exams, student papers, and other teaching materials,
- Lectures, including “Historians and Revolutions,” “Black People in the Americas,” and “West African History in the 19th Century”,
- Letters written to Walter Rodney from students, colleagues, community and political activists, publishers and editors, members of cultural and political organizations, community and labor groups, and educational associations,
- Speaking Invitations/Engagements that demonstrate Walter Rodney’s popularity as a speaker and the international audience that embraced him,
- Walter Rodney’s involvement in the WPA and the WPA’s political positions and organizational structure during its formative years, and
- Audio recordings of Walter Rodney lecturing at universities, conferences and rallies, including his last public speech given at a rally.

To schedule an appointment, contact 404-978-2052 or archives@auctr.edu.

View the Finding Aid: http://findingaid.auctr.edu/arc/view?docId=ead/auctr.edu/walter_rodney.xml



Atlanta University Center

Robert W. Woodruff Library

111 James P. Brawley Dr. SW, Atlanta, GA 30314

www.auctr.edu